A WOMAN'S EXILE.

The winter's dull unfathomed gray,
So near and wide against my door,
Rests in lull of hollow day;
There breaks not here across my floor
One home-bird shadow, through the door
There stirs no call, there leads no way.

Once more in exile ere I die,
O Spirit-Mother, Acadie,
Stretch hands and take me back to thee,
When April comes and night goes by,
When snows melt down in Acadie
To swift blue runnels filled with sky.

There bring me home though years be long,
When some still hour, unheard, at dawn,
The sparrows come, and joy has gone
Across the morning, far along
My river reaches in the dawn,
To pierce the golden Spring with song!

I do remember how the sun
In that north land when May was there,
Would drench the noon with leisure, where
The great calm river-floods did run,
Strewn by the golden willows there
With subtile germs of Spring begun.

And I remember how we came
All day along the stream with calls
Of shy new-comers, till sunfall's
Untroubled quiet heard my name,
Under the low glad swallow-calls,
Divide the gradual dusk with flame.

I weary homeward far o'er sea;
For there a little I would dream
Beside my quiet willow stream,—
Once more at evening, it may be,
To hear his voice across my dream
Unbar the golden Spring for me.

THROUGH THE TWILIGHT.

The red vines bar my window way;
The Autumn sleeps beside his fire,
For he has sent this fleet-foot day
A year's march back to bring to me
One face whose smile is my desire,—
Its light my star.

Surely you will come near and speak,
This calm of death from the day to sever!
And so I shall draw down your cheek
Close to my face—So close!—and know
God's hand between our hands forever
Will set no bar.

Before the dusk falls—even now
I know your step along the gravel,
And catch your quiet poise of brow,
And wait so long till you turn the latch!
Is the way so hard you had to travel?
Is the land so far?

The dark has shut your eyes from mine,
But in this hush of brooding weather
A gleam on twilight's gathering line
Has riven the barriers of dream:
Soul of my soul, we are together
As the angels are!

LOW TIDE ON GRAND-PRE.

The sun goes down, and over all
These barren reaches by the tide
Such unelusive glories fall,
I almost dream they yet will bide
Until the coming of the tide.

And yet I know that not for us,
By any ecstasy of dream,
He lingers to keep luminous
A little while the grievous stream,
Which frets, uncomforted of dream,—

A grievous stream, that to and fro
Athrough the fields of Acadie
Goes wandering, as if to know
Why one beloved face should be
So long from home and Acadie!

Was it a year or lives ago
In a childish whim,
He spilled the wine
Upon the floor,—
In beads on the brim
Was glitter of brine,—
Then, out at the door
In a childish whim!

Out of the storm,
In the flickering light,
A broken glass
Lies on our warm
Hearthstone to-night,
While shadows pass
Out of the storm.

Friends, let him rest
In midnight now.
Desire has gone
On the weary quest
With aching brow:
Until the dawn,
Friends, let him rest.

In sorrow and shame
For the craven heart
In manhood's breast
With valor's name,
Let him depart
Unto his rest
In sorrow and shame.

In after years
God, who bestows
Or withholds the valor,
Shall wipe all tears—
Haply, who knows?—
From his face's pallor
In after years.

He could not learn
To fight with his peers
In sturdier fashion;
Let him return
Through the night with tears,
Stung with the passion
He could not learn.

All bountiful, calm,
Where the great stars burn,
And Spring bloom smothers
The night with balm,
Let him return
To the silent Mother's
All bountiful calm.

Friends, let him rest
In midnight now.
Desire has gone
On the weary quest
With aching brow:
Until the dawn
Friends, let him rest.

THE WRAITH OF THE RED SWAN.

Why tarries the flash of his blade?
At morning he sailed from me,
From the depth of our high beech glade,
To the surge and the sea;
I followed the gleam of his blade.

The cherries were flowering white,
And the Nashwaak Islands flooded,
When the long Red Swan took flight;
On a wind she scudded
With her gunwale buried from sight,
Till her sail drew down out of sight.

He shouted "A northward track,
Before the swallows have flown!"
And now the cherries are black,
And the clover is brown,
And the Red Swan comes not back.

The stream-bends, hidden and shy,
With their harvest of lilies are strewn;
The gravel bars are all dry
And warm in the noon,
Where the rapids go swirling by,—
Go singing and rippling by.

Through many an evening gone,
Where the roses drank the breese,
When the pale slow moon outshone
Through the slanting trees,
I dreamed of the long Red Swan.

How I should know that one

Where the rake of her gunwale dipped
As the spent black waves ran aft,
In a hand tor helm there was gripped
The sheen of a haft,
Which sang in the furrows it ripped.

Then I knew and was glad, for what foam
Could the rush of her speed o'erwhelm
If Louis and his Whitehaulm
Were Steersman and helm,
When the long Red Swan drave home,
When the long Red Swan drave home?

Yet ever the sweeping mist
Was a veil to his face from me,
Though yearning I well half wist
What his look might be
From the carven bend of his wrist.

Then a break, and the cloud was gone,
And there was his set keen face
Afire with smouldring dawn
In the joy of her race,
In the flight of the long Red Swan,
In the flight of the long Red Swan;

Though drenched in the spray-drift hoar,
As of old it was ruddy and warm
Through the black hair, grizzled and frore,
Whipped out on the storm;
Then "Louis!" I launched on the roar.

O'er night and the brawl of the stream
The hail of my cry flew on;
He turned with a smile supreme,
And the long Red Swan
Grew dim as the wraith of a dream,
As the blown white wraith of a dream.

Look! Burnished and blue, what a sweep
Of river outwinds in the sun;
What miles of shimmering deep
Where the hills grow one
With their shadow of summer and sleep!

I gaze from the cedar shade
Day long, high over the beach,
And never a ripple is laid
To the long blue reach,
Where faded the gleam of that blade,
The far gold flash of his blade.

I follow and dream and recall,
Forget and remember and dream;
When the interval grass waves tall,
I move in the gleam
Where his blade-beats glitter and fall.

Yet never my dream gets clear
Of the whispering bodeful spell
The aspen shudders to hear,
Yet hurries to tell—
How the long Red Swan draws near,
How the long Red Swan draws near.

IN LYRIC SEASON.

The lyric April time is forth
With lyric mornings, frost and sun;
From leaguers vast of night undone
Auroral mild new stars are born.

And ever at the year's return,
Along the valleys gray with rime,
Thou leadest as of old, where time
Can nought but follow to thy sway.

The trail is far through leagues of Spring
And long the quest to the white core
Of harvest quiet, yet once more
I gird me to the old unrest.

I know I shall not ever meet
Thy calm regard across the year,
And yet I know thou wilt draw near,
Nor stir the hour asleep on guard

Beside the orchard, when athwart
The dusk, a meteor's gleam unbars
God's lyric of the April stars
Above the autumn hills of dream.

IN APPLE TIME.

Regathers as rapids regather,
Outfleeing the traces of flight.

In the valley of morrow for shelter,
It beats at the goal of the sun;
Almost the veil of remembrance
As a weaving of shade is undone.

Often and often at evening
The woodland curtain swings;
I call you, then—it has fallen!
Only the woodthrush sings.

Over the floor of midnight
Wanders a matchless rhyme,
Blown of the wind asunder—
Out from the echo of time.

SHELLEY.

One heart of all the hearts of men,
Tameless nor free,
Plunged for a moment in the fire
Of old regret and young desire,
A meteor rushed through air, and then—
What eyes can see?

O rebel captive, fallen soul,
Self-strong and proud,
Throbbing to lift against the stars
An angel voice—whose frenzy mars
And frets the song which thou wouldst roll
Aloft aloud!

To thee was given half to mould
That heart of thine
(Knowing all passion and the pain
Of man's imperious disdain)
Into a song whose splendor told
The dawn divine.

It held the rapture of the hills
Deep in its core;
The purple shadows of the ocean
Moved it to supreme emotion,
The harvest of those barren rills
Was in its store.

Thine was a love that strives and calls,
Outcast from home,
Burning to free the soul of man
With some new life: how strange, a ban
Should set thy sleep beneath the walls
Of changeless Rome!

More soft, I deem, from spring to spring,
Thy sleep would be,
Where this far western headland lies
Beneath these matchless azure skies,
Under thee hearing beat and swing,
The eternal sea.

A bay so beauteous islanded—
A sea so stilled—
You well might dream the world were new;
And some fair day's Italian blue,
Unsoiled of all the ages dead,
Should be fulfilled.

Where all the livelong day and night
A music stirs,
The summer wind should find thy home,
And fall in lulls and cease to roam:
A covert resting, warm and bright,
Among the firs.

An ageless forest dell, which knows
Nor grief nor fear,
Across whose green red-berried floor
Fresh spring shall come and winter hoar,
With keen delight and rapt repose
Each year by year.

And there the thrushes, calm, supreme,
Forever reign,
Whose glorious kingly golden throats
Hold but a few remembered notes;
Yet in their song is blent no dream
Or tinge of pain!

Frye's Island, N. B.

FIRST CROAK.

Northward, crow,
Croak and fly!
Tell her I
Long to go,—

Through the fields of Acadie
Goes wandering, as if to know
Why one beloved face should be
So long from home and Acadie!

Was it a year or lives ago
We took the grasses in our hands,
And caught the summer flying low
Over the waving meadow lands,
And held it there between our hands?

The while the river at our feet—
A droway inland meadow stream—
At set of sun the after-beat
Made running gold, and in the gleam
We freed our birch upon the stream.

There down along the elms at dusk
We lifted dripping blade to drift,
Through twilight scented fine like musk,
Where night and gloom awhile uplift,
Nor sunder soul and soul adrift.

And that we took into our hands—
Spirit of life or subtler thing—
Breathed on us there, and loosed the bands
Of death, and taught us, whispering,
The secret of some wonder-thing.

Then all your face grew light, and seemed
To hold the shadow of the sun;
The evening faltered, and I deemed
That time was ripe, and years had done
Their wheeling underneath the sun.

So all desire and all regret,
And fear and memory, were naught;
One to remember or forget
The keen delight our hands had caught;
Morrow and yesterday were naught!

The night has fallen, and the tide . . .
Now and again comes drifting home,
Across these aching barrens wide,
A sigh like driven wind or foam:
In grief the flood is bursting home!

CARNATIONS IN WINTER.

Your carmine flakes of bloom to-night
The fire of wintry sunsets hold;
Again in dreams you burn to light
A far Canadian garden old.

The blue north summer over it
Is bland with long ethereal days;
The gleaming martins wheel and flit
Where breaks your sun down orient ways.

There, when the gradual twilight falls,
Through quietudes of dusk afar,
Hermit antiphonal hermit calls
From hills below the first pale star.

Then in your passionate love's foredoom
Once more your spirit stirs the air,
And you are lifted through the gloom
To warm the coils of her dark hair!

ILICET.

Friends, let him rest
In midnight now.
Desire has gone
On the weary quest
With aching brow:
Until the dawn,
Friends, let him rest.

With a boy's desire
He set the cup
To his lips to drink;
The ruddy fire
Was lifted up
At day's cool brink,
With a boy's desire.

The heart of a boy!
He tasted life,
And the bitter sting
Of sorrow in joy,
Failure in strife,
Was pain to wring
The heart of a boy.

Where the roses drank the breeze,
When the pale slow moon outshone
Through the slanting trees,
I dreamed of the long Red Swan.

How I should know that one
Great stroke and the time of the swing
Urging her on and on,
Spring after spring,
Lifting the long Red Swan,
Lifting the long Red Swan!

How I should drink the foam—
The far white lines from her swift
Keen bow when, hurrying to come,
With lift upon lift
The long Red Swan came home!

Here would I crouch down low,
And watch the Red Swan from far,
A speck in the evening, grow
To a flaming star
In the dusk as of ages ago,
In the dusk of ages ago.

I would lean and with lips apart
See the streak of the Red Swan's fire
Glow dim at the twilight's heart,—
Feel the core of desire
From the slumber of years upstart.

How soon should the day grow wan,
And a wind from the south unfold,
Like the low beginning of dawn,—
Grow steady and hold
In the race of the long Red Swan,
In the race of the long Red Swan!

How glad of their river once more
Would the crimson wings unfurl,
And the long Red Swan, on the roar
Of a whitecap swirl,
Steer in to the arms of her shore!

But the wind is the voice of a dirge.
What wonder allures him, what care,
So far on the world's bleak verge?
Why lingers he there,
By the sea and the desolate surge,
In the sound of the moan of the surge?

Last midnight the thunder rode
With the lightning astride of the storm
Low down in the east, where glowed
The fright of his form
On the ocean-wild rack he bestrode.

The hills were his ocean wan,
And the white tree-tops foamed high,
Lashed out of the night, whereon
In a gust fled by
A wraith of the long Red Swan,
A wraith of the long Red Swan.

Her crimson bellying sail
Was fleckered with brine and spume;
Its taught wet clew, through the veil
Of the driving fume,
Was sheeted home on the gale.

The shoal of the fury of night
Was a bank in the fog, where-through
Hissed the Red Swan in her flight;
She shrilled as she flew,
A shriek from the seething white,
In the face of the world grown white.

She labored not in the sea,
Careened but a handbreadth over,
And, the gleam of her side laid free
For the drift to cover,
Sped on to the dark in her lee.

Through crests of the hoarse tide swing
Clove sheer the sweep of her bow;
There was loosed the ice-roaring of Spring
From the jaws of her prow,—
Of the long Red Swan full-wing,
The long Red Swan full wing

God's lyric of the April stars
Above the autumn hills of dream.

IN APPLE TIME.

The apple harvest days are here,
The boding apple harvest days,
And down the flaming valley ways,
The foresters of time draw near.

Through leagues of bloom I went with Spring,
To call you on the slopes of morn,
Where in imperious song is born
The wild heart of the goldenwing.

I roved through alien summer lands,
I sought your beauty near and far;
To-day, where russet shadows are,
I hold your face between my hands.

On runnels dark by slopes of fern,
The hasy undern sleeps in sun.
Remembrance and desire, undone,
From old regret to dreams return.

The apple harvest time is here,
The tender apple harvest time;
A sheltering calm, unknown at prime,
Settles upon the brooding year.

A RIFT.

O what a dream I could dream you,
If only the words would rhyme!
But noon and shadow are neighbors,
And sorrow is playmate of time.

How you should loiter forever
Through nights of entrancing May,
Where the hill flowers blow tender
Just in the coming of day!

How you should grow with their growing,
And watch through the underleaves
That old renewal of wonder
The gloaming of dawn unweaves!

Filled with the freshening hours,
There you should wander and muse,
Child of the stars and the uplands
Calm in their twilights and dews.

There in the infinite silence
How we should learn and forget,
Know and be known, and remember
Only the name of regret!—

One in that beauty of quiet,
Twain as the beat of a rhyme,
Seeds of a single desire
In the heart of the apple of time.

There you would ripen to harvest,—
Spirit of dream and of dew!—
Breath on the air till the fire
At the core of night burned through

The forest of brown stream waters,
Riving their glooms with gold,
Whereon the white drifts of lilies
Flake upon flake unfold,—

Then with that brow unshadowed,
Turn and remember and smile:
Failure, despairing, and travail
Are dead in the weary while.

So shall regret and long dreaming
Take joy and fulfilment to rhyme,
On the verge of summer and morning
Beyond the borders of time.

Here when the dusk half covers,
And the twilight half reveals,
The clew of a woven shadow
The glare of midnoon conceals.

There springs to the trail, and follows,
The cry of a wild sweet thing—
At last shall desire unravel
The wind in the hollows of Spring!

It hurtles and dies and re-echoes
Abroad on the shallows of night,

FIRST CROAK.

Northward, crow,
Croak and fly!
Tell her I
Long to go,—

Only am
Satisfied
Where the wide
Maples flame,

Over those
Hills of fir,
Flooding her
Morning snows.

Thou shalt see,
Break and sing
Days of Spring,
Dawning free.

Northward, crow,
Croak and fly,—
Strive, or die
Striving so!

Darker hearts,
We, than some
Who shall come
When Spring starts.

Well I see,
You and I
By and by
Shall get free.

Only now,
Beat away
As we may
Best know how!

Never soar
We, nor float;
But one note,
And no more.

Northward, crow,
Croak and fly!
Would that I
Too might go!

Lark or thrush
Someday, you
Up the blue
Cleave the hush

O the joy
Then you feel,
Who shall steal
Or destroy?

Have not I
Known how good,
Field and wood,
Stream and sky?—

Longed to free
Soul in flight,
Night by night,
Tree to tree?

Northward, crow,
Croak and fly
You and I,—
Striving, go.

Still though fail
Singing, keep
Croaking deep
Strong and hale!

Flying straight,
Soon we go
Where the snow
Tarries late.

Yet the Spring
Is—how sweet!
Hark that beat:
Goldenwing!

Good for all
Faint of heart,
What a start
In his call!

Northward crow,
Croak and fly,
Though the sky
Thunder No!

Bliss Carman